

Congressman Herger (R-CA), Ranking Member on the Ways & Means Subcommittee on Health, issued the following statement blasting House Democratic Leadership for shutting down debate during today's committee meeting on the Democrat's plan for government-run health care:

"Since the House took up the health care reform debate this year, there has been a disappointing lack of bipartisanship offered by the Administration and Congressional Democrats. Over the summer, H.R. 3200 came before the Ways & Means Committee and was rammed through without giving members a chance to review the 1,000 pages of bill text. During August, throughout town halls, protests, and polls the American people made it abundantly clear that they don't want to hand over control of their health care to the government. Stunningly, the Administration and House Democrats continue to turn a deaf ear to the will of the people. Now, Democrats have laid the groundwork for a plan to muscle through their health care bill using a special procedure that will limit debate and enable this far-reaching proposal to become law with no bipartisan consensus.

"During today's meeting of the Ways & Means Committee I, along with my fellow Republicans, stood ready to offer amendments to the bill to address some of the concerns the American people have expressed over the last several months. I sought to offer an amendment to require the proposed government-run health plan to pay market-based rates to hospitals and doctors, instead of using the unfair Medicare and Medicaid payment structures that squeeze Northern California health care providers and force them to charge higher prices to patients with private coverage. I had also looked forward to supporting amendments authored by other Ways & Means Republicans that would have required Members of Congress to sign up for the government-run plan, prevented illegal immigrants from receiving taxpayer-funded benefits, provided for meaningful medical liability reform to reduce health care costs, directed Medicare to inform seniors about how the proposed bill would affect their benefits, and ensured that the public would have at least 72 hours to review the final bill before it comes to a vote.

"Sadly, Democrats chose to shut down the debate and refused to allow the Committee to vote on any of these important amendments, making it all too clear that they intend to ignore input from their colleagues across the aisle and, even worse, the input of the American people. I urge them to reverse course completely and finally welcome Republicans to the table and allow a vote on our ideas in order find a bipartisan solution that works for America."